

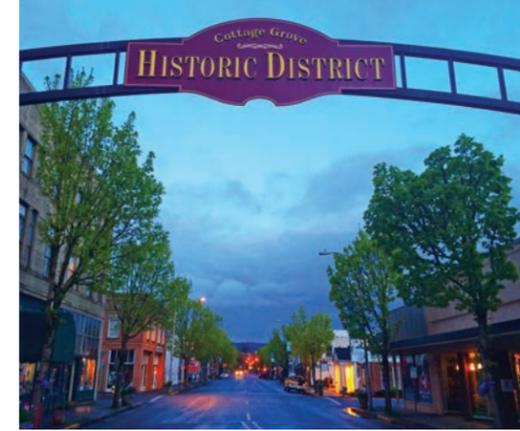
# League of Oregon Cities

2022-2027 ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN



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## ABOUT THIS PLAN

This Strategic Plan provides a north star for the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) as it carries out its mission over the next five years. It was informed by:

- The May 2022 Insight Report, which included quantitative and qualitative findings resulting from a staff and stakeholder survey, one-on-one Board member interviews, and four staff and stakeholder focus groups;
- A series of work sessions with a core Planning Team comprised of a subset of the Board and staff; and
- Additional ad hoc work sessions with staff to more deeply investigate components of this Plan.

Four Imperatives—those big ideas that must be accomplished if the Plan is to be successful—are at the center of the Plan. Each Imperative is supported by a set of Initiatives—actions designed to achieve Plan goals—and Objectives that will help the organization measure progress.

Over the course of the next five years, the LOC will take on these Initiatives, annually prioritizing the workload. The Initiatives are not meant to be an inflexible to-do list. Rather, they serve as a roadmap and should be reviewed regularly to ensure the work specified continues to meet the Objectives tied to each Imperative.

To ensure progress towards the Imperatives and Initiatives of the Plan, the LOC will routinely review the status of the Plan. The LOC staff are responsible for tracking progress on Initiatives and communicating the status of the Plan to the Board of Directors during each regularly scheduled Board meeting in a calendar year, of which there are traditionally five.

On a regular basis, the Board will review the Imperatives and Initiatives of the Plan and determine if updates need to be made.

This Plan describes work that is in addition to the core work of the LOC such as ongoing lobbying and advocacy, implementation of its DEI Lens, and its regular membership conferences and trainings, etc. Successful execution of this Plan will require an annual review of existing work and prioritizing specific tasks accordingly.

# Overview



The LOC embarked upon a five-year organizational Strategic Plan to ensure it is best positioned to carry out the vision, mission, and priorities of the organization. The LOC engaged Coraggio Group to support the creation of this work.

The first steps in the process of developing the Plan included gaining feedback from stakeholders on priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

- A survey was made available in March 2022 to every mayor and chief executive officer of a member city. Additionally, a link to the survey was circulated via a Bulletin article, with said article being published on two separate occasions. The survey had 165 respondents made up of mayors, council presidents, city administrators (which includes both city managers and city recorders), and the LOC staff.
- Four focus groups were held: the Local Government People of Color Caucus, the Women's Caucus, the LOC management team, and the LOC staff in April 2022 to garner additional qualitative input.
- 23 one-on-one interviews were held with LOC Board members.

Feedback from these engagement efforts, as well as access to available data sources, were synthesized into a comprehensive Insight Report that provided strategic context for a series of planning sessions to create the Plan.

The Planning Team guided the development of the Plan. The Planning Team was comprised of a subset of the Board and staff. Composition of the Planning Team is described later in the Acknowledgement section of this document. The Planning Team met over multiple sessions through Spring 2022 to create this Strategic Plan. In addition, input was sought from staff on the work as it was underway. The elements of the Strategic Plan include:

## Strategic Clarity



### VISION

What is the ideal future state we are striving to create?



### VALUES

What are the fundamental beliefs that shape how we work together and serve our mission?



### MISSION

What is our primary focus as an organization?  
What do we do each day that helps us realize our vision?

## Strategic Focus & Action



### IMPERATIVES

What must be accomplished over the planning horizon? What are our overarching areas of focus?



### INITIATIVES

What finite-duration, discretionary projects or programs, outside of our organizations's day-to-day operational activities, will we take on?



### OBJECTIVES

How will we know when we are successful?  
What will be our measure?

# Strategic Clarity



## VISION

That all Oregonians live in thriving communities that are equitable, healthy, and safe.



## MISSION

The LOC is the essential and trusted partner for local, state, federal, and community leaders in developing policy and legislation to empower Oregon's cities through collaboration, advocacy, training, and sharing best practices.



## VALUES

**Healthy Relationships.** The LOC Board and staff know every interaction is an opportunity to demonstrate that someone is heard and respected, their issues matter, and they are valued, even when there is disagreement.

**Teamwork.** Together through collaboration, we are able to go further, nurture trust, bring more people along, and better demonstrate our helpfulness.

**Calm, Consistent Follow-Through.** Our ability to be nimble and support each other and Oregon's cities provides reassurance in a changing world.

**High Bar.** We show up whole-heartedly for each other and the service we provide throughout the state. We go the extra mile to ensure a job well-done and efficiently accomplished.

**The Power of Knowledge.** We provide accurate and accessible information to decision-makers.

# Strategic Focus and Action

## IMPERATIVE

### Enhance advocacy and education services to meet the evolving needs of members and communities.

#### OBJECTIVES<sup>1</sup>

- Increase in the LOC's core services effectiveness ratings based on the 2022 baseline.
- Increase attendance at LOC events and trainings by 5% annually.
- Year-over-year increase in the participation of members from underrepresented communities on LOC policy and conference committees.

#### INITIATIVES

**Evaluate effectiveness of core services to meet the evolving needs of members.** The LOC will launch a regular inquiry process to seek input on what types of service offerings are most needed by members, with particular attention given to differences between the state's urban, rural, and smaller cities. While the Insight Report has initial data on the importance and effectiveness of certain services, the LOC will dig deeper and at a more granular level to better understand areas for enhancement. This evaluation process will ask for demographic information so that responses can be understood and considered based upon factors such as city size, gender, race, or other distinction to ensure ongoing equity in addressing needs.

**Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Oregon Municipal Policy.** The Oregon Municipal Policy is the overarching Board directive that guides the LOC's policy priority adoption setting process. This Policy has not been updated since 2008 and fails to consider critical policy topics, such as houselessness. The LOC will review the Oregon Municipal Policy and recommend changes to enhance and improve the policy identification and adoption process.

**Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the current legislative priority adoption process.** A primary service the LOC offers is lobbying on behalf of issues important to cities. The methodology to identify priorities takes in numerous inputs, and benefits from regular review and adjustment to ensure it remains current. To that end, the LOC will comprehensively review and—if necessary—update its legislative priority adoption process to ensure the process remains relevant and responsive to evolving needs of different sizes and type of communities.

**Enhance training accessibility.** The LOC is renowned for its training, and city leaders across the state voice appreciation for these sessions. However, the Insight Report highlighted that increased access to training was a priority for survey respondents who identified as female or as a person of color. Enhancing the accessibility of training would increase the efficacy of the organization as it leans into its mission and Equity Lens.

The LOC will explore what barriers exist to accessing training, the mode of training delivery—in person, on-line, and asynchronous offerings; consider how and what written, or video training materials are made available; and explore how to ensure training is accessible by offering scholarships for members to participate.

**Provide training on self-advocacy and lobbying.** While the LOC provides lobbying on key issues on behalf of cities, empowering cities to lobby for their own interests is just as important. To this end, the LOC will develop tools, best-practices, and training curriculum to ensure cities have the resources and capacity to effectively advocate for their own interests and the interests of the LOC.

<sup>1</sup>Where applicable, data will be disaggregated by demographics, geography, and city size

 IMPERATIVE

## Optimize the LOC's reputation and impact through improved communication and storytelling.

 OBJECTIVES<sup>2</sup>

- Increase member sentiment and satisfaction based on 2022 baseline.
- Year-over-year increase in LOC owned media and communication channel engagement.

 INITIATIVES

**Create an LOC ambassador program.** Develop a program for leaders throughout the state to act as ambassadors for the LOC. This program will provide participants with effective ways to talk about the LOC with others and share what the LOC offers to its members. The LOC will seek opportunities and avenues for members to participate in the Ambassador program and to regularly participate in the LOC's offerings to continue to grow their knowledge of the organization (note: the Equity Lens will be useful here as different members may have barriers to meeting this request).

**Develop member-focused communication strategy.** The LOC will investigate and identify strategies that enhance awareness of the LOC services by members, likely utilizing a professional firm to support this effort. The communication strategy will identify opportunities for the LOC and its members to tell the story of the LOC's impact on Oregon cities, and identify actions to help the organization better share and communicate information directly with members.

**Develop other-government communications and engagement strategy.** Part of the LOC's mission includes partnership with other government entities, such as counties, councils of governments, state agencies, special districts, or federal agencies. To ensure ongoing effective relationships of the LOC with these partners, it will develop strategies to ensure meaningful and impactful communications and engagement opportunities.

<sup>2</sup>Where applicable, data will be disaggregated by demographics, geography, and city size

 IMPERATIVE

## Refine service delivery to address systemic gaps.

 OBJECTIVES<sup>3</sup>

- Increase in member awareness and satisfaction of the LOC services and resources based on 2022 baseline.
- Increase in member engagement based on 2022 baseline.
- Increase in sentiment and engagement scores from women and BIPOC city leaders based on 2022 baseline.

 INITIATIVES

**Develop a welcome packet and onboarding program for newly elected officials.** The Insight Report highlighted that many newly elected officials do not have a clear understanding of the LOC's role and available services. To address this gap, the LOC will develop a welcome packet and broader onboarding resources for newly elected officials. This could include a list of contacts, on-line / asynchronous trainings, program summaries, overviews of recent policy positions, links to template resources, a directory of the LOC committees and caucuses, etc.

**Investigate a fee-for-service program to better meet the needs of rural and small communities.** While the LOC has a core set of services it provides throughout the state, there are other, more tailored services or resources the LOC could offer its members, particularly those from under-resourced cities or communities. The LOC will explore offering new or enhanced services to members for a fee. To do so, it will first explore what services members may pay for, an appropriate rate, and the risks involved. The LOC will identify a time frame for keeping pilot programs in place before determining if they have a sufficient return on investment to continue as a regular offering.

**Utilize caucuses to provide greater voice and partnership for diverse leaders.** To better engage with the growing body of diverse leaders in Oregon, the Board, the Local Government People of Color Caucus, and the Women's Caucus will jointly develop a Plan to build stronger partnerships with diverse leaders across the state. The purpose of this effort will be to help amplify the voice of diverse leaders and provide them a safe conduit to share their needs and concerns as they lead their respective communities. In the process of creating this Plan, it is likely that additional ways to leverage the caucuses will emerge to be considered in the Plan.

<sup>3</sup>Where applicable, data will be disaggregated by demographics, geography, and city size

 IMPERATIVE

## Implement new organizational practices and processes to enhance internal culture and improve alignment between board and staff.

 OBJECTIVES<sup>4</sup>

- Increase staff and Board Net Promoter Score based on 2022 baseline.
- Improve employee satisfaction as measured by the Gallup Q12 Employee Engage Survey; target an average annual score of 4 or higher (out of 5) for all facets of employee engagement.

 INITIATIVES

**Develop Internal Communication Plan.** The LOC leadership will take the results of the Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Survey and the Whole Systems Analysis—both of which are a part of the Insight Report—and craft an Internal Communications Plan to address areas of concern. For example, leadership may consider methods to boost recognition of employee contributions, check in on their professional development, or other methods to invest in employee retention. Additionally, leadership may explore ways to enhance the effectiveness of processes/procedures and to communicate more effectively and efficiently.

**Host an annual Board/staff retreat.** Prior to the new Board member meeting every year, the LOC will host a retreat for Board and staff to cultivate relationships and understanding. This event is intended to be a less formal environment in which individuals can get to know each other, explore the work performed, understand roles and responsibilities, clarify decision making, and hold space for creatively thinking about evolving challenges.

**Implement a Board member training program.** To ensure the Board is in the best position possible to support the LOC, a training program will be developed. Components of the program may be offered at the annual Board retreat, via on-line live sessions, via asynchronous on-line sessions, and at other live venues. Content will vary and evolve over time, but would likely touch upon what the LOC does, DEI, and other content.

**Develop and implement a DEI training program.** While the LOC has crafted a DEI Lens, it is clear that a common understanding and application of it has not yet been achieved. To address this, the LOC will develop and implement a DEI training program for staff and the Board so they grow their awareness and ability to apply the DEI lens when making decisions for the organization.

<sup>4</sup>Where applicable, data will be disaggregated by demographics, geography, and city size



# Core Planning Team Members

- **Taneea Browning**, President, Councilor, Central Point
- **Steve Callaway**, Vice President, Mayor, Hillsboro
- **Dave Drotzmann**, Treasurer, Mayor, Hermiston
- **John McArdle**, Past President, Mayor, Independence
- **Jessica Engelke**, Director, Mayor, North Bend
- **Arlene Burns**, Director, Mayor, Mosier
- **John Walsh**, Director, City Administrator, St. Helens
- **Roland Herrera**, Director, Councilor, Keizer
- **Patty Mulvihill**, Interim Executive Director
- **Jim McCauley**, Legislative Director

